THE DAROD INVASION

An account of the movement of Darod Somalis into Jubaland and the Northern Frontier District of Kenya

RICHARD TURNBULL

Dar-es-Salaam
1961

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The history of the Horn of Africa, and indeed of most of East Africa, is one of the migration of pastoral people in search of fresh pastures and new grazing ranges for their stock. These migrations have been generally southerly, but as is to be expected, the precise direction over any particular period has depended almost entirely on the availability of water. On the eastern side of the Horn there are definite migration routes; and these have been followed by wave after wave of Galla and Somali people all drawn southwards and westwards by the lure of plentiful water and rich grazing lands where their cattle and camels may prosper and increase, free from the hazards of tribal warfare and the sicknesses that beset stock in the more closely populated areas.

Just as these movements were the result of excessive pressure on land, so they brought about a ceaseless and bitter competition for the waters and grazing in the path of the migration - a competition which was sometimes resolved by an alliance between the newcomers and those in possession, but more often by open conflict followed either by the flight of the earlier occupants or by the withdrawal of the invaders until they judged the time to be opportune for a further thrust.

In this paper I propose to describe the southward movement of the Darod Somalis in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the events leading to their arrival in the

Northern Frontier District of Kenya in the first decade of the twentieth.

The Darod invasion followed much the same course as the earlier movements of the Jidu, the Adjuran and the Hawiyah, which groups of tribes had, in succession, thrust their way down the valley of the Web Shebelle, and down the coast, forcing the Bantu and Galla occupants of those areas to flee before them, and precipitating similar movements further to the south. The pattern of these migrations was a fairly constant one - a steady move to the south and south-west along the few routes where water is to be found; a rate of progress that depends on the seasons, the health of the stock, the rain and the grazing; and an exemplary skill at either defeating opposition or disarming it. If resistance were offered to the invaders, and if it looked to be too strong to be overcome by force, and if no outflanking moves were possible, the migrants would halt, often for as long as a generation, before resuming their southward migration, and during this time would absorb at least a part of the people that barred their way.

The technique adopted by the Darod to achieve their end differed hardly at all from that of their precursors. Individuals or families would move into the grazing grounds of the tribes, such as the Hawiyah, or the Rahanwein, which obstructed their southerly march, and would crave their protection. They would offer their young men as additions to

the fighting strength of the host tribe, and their cattle or camels to augment the stock bank from which "dia" must be paid; and would give formal undertakings to abide by the customs of those they hoped to make their hosts, and to be punctilious in their observance of local fiats concerning the use of grazing and water. They were usually accepted, for they were fine fighting men and had a great wealth of stock: and as soon as they had established themselves they would at once set about strengthening their position by summoning from the north their cousins and their collaterals; they would stay as shegats to the host tribe, for as long as it suited their book - sometimes for a few years only, sometimes for a couple of generations - but as soon as they felt the time was propitious, and that they had sufficient strength for the purpose, they would turn upon their hosts and either absorb them or destroy them.

Migrations of this sort cannot be described on a simple, orderly historical basis - they are subject to the seasons, to the health of the stock, and to the need to subdue or expel one's neighbours; but, generally speaking, the order of march in the case of the Darod invasion was that the Ogaden moved first, followed by the Marehan, followed again by the Herti. Foremost amongst the Ogaden were the various sections of the Mohamed Zubeir, Rer Abdille. Ugas Abdille was the grandson of Mohamed Zubeir himself, and it was from his family that there sprang, six or seven generations later, the Ugas Guleid, the Ugas Hersi,

the Rer Amaden, the Rer Samantar, and the Rer Wais. With them were many families of tribes such as the Maghabul, the Telemuggeh and the Aulihan, which although not Mohamed Zubeir are numbered amongst the Ogaden group of the Darod. At this time they referred to themselves generally as Kablalla. Kablalla is the ancestor of all the major Darod sections, other than the Marehan; and it is probable that by marching, as it were, under this flag they managed to maintain a unity which was essential in a strange and potentially hostile country, but which could not have been preserved for a day had the old internal feuds of the various Ogaden sections been allowed to manifest themselves.

The move from the "homeland" of the Ogaden north of the Shebelle took a long time to get going; it started in the early part of the eighteenth century, but so great was the resistance offered by the Hawiyah and the Rahanwein - who were themselves tough new migrants - that it was not until towards the late 1700s that the Rer Abdille managed to get a lodgement on the river. About 1780 they succeeded in establishing themselves on the middle reaches of the Web Shebelle and from this foothold were able to launch themselves further to the south. But they never achieved their aim of occupying the Baidoa Plateau. The Rahanwein, in particular the Elai, were too strong for them, and were able to keep the invaders to the country between the river and the rising ground.

Either through fear of a reduction in their

strength through continued fighting, or as the first move in a long-range plan, many of these Ogaden families (including the Telemuggeh) entered into a shegat relationship with the Elai; and for some twenty years lived in this subordinate position around Bur Hakaba on the south-eastern corner of the Baidoa Plateau. It was here that Abdi Ibrahim, the Grand Old Man of the Abd Wak, was born; his family still speak of that period of near-bondage with shame and embarrassment.

Between 1840 and 1850 the Ogaden attempted to reverse the relationship that existed between the Elai and themselves; they had gained strength and wealth during their stay at Bur Hakaba, and felt confident of being able to defeat their hosts and to take over the extensive grazing areas which at that time were commanded by the tribe. The Elai, however, were too powerful; and, after a fierce fight near Maddagoi at which the Ogaden were defeated, the group of Ker Abdille, Telemuggeh, Maghabul, and Aulihan, together with those who had become shegat to them, were compelled to extricate themselves as best they could. They could not go to the west, for the middle Juba was closed to them by the Rahanwein; and the Rahanwein at this time were still a force to be reckoned with - in 1838 they had sacked Bardera and had become acknowledged masters of the left bank of the river. The way to the south-east was barred by the Tuni and the Dirr. To the east lay the sea; and to the north the Elai who had just defeated them. So that the only path open to them was to move to the lower Juba and to see whether they could not make their way into the country

of the Wardeh. There is no doubt that, had they wished to do so, they could have crossed the river at once, for they were strong enough to have been able to force the passage; but once having crossed they would have been in an impossible position for, without the consent of the Wardeh, they could not have moved their stock into the wet weather and mid-season grazing areas to the west; and to have remained in the vicinity of the river would have exposed them to serious losses from the usual fly-borne diseases of the gosha.

The Wardeh were well aware of the recent history of the Darod migrants; they were apprehensive of the presence on the far bank of men they knew would do their utmost to destroy them, and accordingly made their dispositions to prevent the crossing of the river. The Darod for their part decided to rely upon diplomacy rather than force and set themselves to woo the Wardeh; nevertheless they sent their young men across the river to study the Wardeh strength and quite a number of skirmishes took place. Maghan Yussuf, a leading figure of the Mohamed Zubeir, and grandfather of the present Sultan, himself defeated a Wardeh party as far west as Wajir Bor in 1848.

Wardeh or Warra-daiya is the name used by the Somali for the Orma or Southern Galla. Three hundred years earlier, these people had formed the advance guard of the great Hamitic invasion from the North. But though they started off as conquerors, pushing the Bantu and the Nyika in front of them, they ended as fugitives; for after the campaigns of Ahamed

Gran in Ethiopia the main Galla wave, instead of continuing in the rear of the Wardeh, turned to the west and moved up the valleys of the Shebelle and the Ganale Doria into Ethiopia; and before long the Wardeh found that they had at their backs not a migration of people whose language they understood and whose ways they knew but the spearhead of the series of Somali thrusts to the south which for the past four hundred years have dominated the whole of this region.

The first Somalis to make contact with the Wardeh were the Jidu, and even today the Wardeh refer to all Somalis, from whatever branch of the five Somali nations they come, by this name. Behind the Jidu came the Adjuran and the Hawiyah. By 1650 the Wardeh had been driven from the valley of the Web Shebelle and from the Baidoa Plateau, and had been compelled to concentrate themselves in the low country to the south-east of the plateau. Here they stayed for some three generations, centred round what is now Bur Hakaba. These moves took eight or nine generations to accomplish. As the Jidu, the Adjuran and the Hawiyah forced the Wardeh to the south, so they themselves were pressed from the north by successive further waves of Somali migrants; and as the Wardeh moved so they pushed in front of them the Nyika people of the Coast and the early Bantu inhabitants of the country between the Shebelle and the Juba. Even south of the Juba the pressure was felt; the old Nyika Kingdom based on Shungwaiya was broken up and its people dispersed south-westwards along the coast.

The Jidu, the Adjuran and the Hawiyah were followed by the Rahanwein. It was this last group that drove the Wardeh out of Bur Hakaba, and finally out of Somalia altogether into the country which later became known as Jubaland.

When the Wardeh crossed the Juba they found on the west bank some of the Gurreh and a number of camel-owning families of the Tuni. The Tuni were a confederation, with no common ancestor, rather than a distinct tribe of the usual Somali pattern; amongst them were to be found elements of the Dirr, the Hawiyah and the Rahanwein, and even of the Jidu. The main body of the group lived between the Juba and the sea, downstream of Gelib, the trans-Juba families being fragments which had either been pushed westwards by the southerly march of the Jidu and Biemal down the Somalia coast or which had crossed the river in search of better grazing.

The trans-Juba Tuni, after living for two or three generations amongst the Wardeh - long enough for them to acquire a common legend about their defection from Islam - quarrelled with them; and rather than rejoin the rest of the tribe on the other side of the river, moved off westwards up the Lak Dera. They fetched up, in the first half of the last century, on the Lorian. Here they came upon the Laikipiak Masai, and for some reason which will never be disclosed and which it is not easy to guess at, the two tribes found a kind of affinity between themselves.

The most probable explanation is that the Tuni had more of Rahanwein than of true Somali blood in them and were, therefore, less inclined to pick a fight than the Marehan, say would have been. In any case, they had not the spur of Islam to drive them on; and even if they had been Muslims, reinforcements were far and few, and their willingness to help quite unpredictable. Whatever the reason, many of the Tuni became absorbed by the Laikipiak, and after a generation had adopted both Masai dress and Masai customs. They had ceased to be Tuni and had become, at any rate in Somali eyes, indistinguishable from the Masai. They became known as Koreh, just as the Masai and Samburu were; and in the Somali accounts of their battles with the Uaso people in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century it is not easy to disentangle the fortunes of the Tuni migrants from those of their Masai hosts. Indeed, they scarcely presented an identity of their own, until, after another migration and further adventures, they appeared at Marsabit, some speaking Masai and some a kind of Rahanwein Somali, and all referring to themselves as Rendille.

From 1800 to 1850 the Wardeh dominated most of the country between the Juba on the east, and the volcanic plains of the Marsabit "buleh" on the west. To the north-west they claimed to rule as far as Eil Had, whose wells they say they dug. To the west they went as far as Demu and Sottawesa; and on the south-west their writ ran, so they say, as far as the Sabaki. In her book on the Galla, Alice Werner mentions that the Bararetta (a branch of the Orma) were at Voi in 1849, where they

menaced all travellers. (This, of course, was before the Masai had suffered their defeat at the hands of the Wahehe and had turned north again to contend with the Orma for the country west of the Tana.) Most of the country over which the Wardeh professed to exercise authority had, when they first made their way there, been unoccupied - or, at most, rarely used; but the Wajir wells were then, as now, an important centre, and before the newcomers could safely use the area as a dry weather range for their stock, they had to come to conclusions with the earlier masters of it. The Wardeh themselves claim that the people they evicted were the Madhanleh, the legendary men of enormous height and prodigious skill at well-making. But both the Adjuran and the Boran are unshakeable in their belief that, on the arrival of the Wardeh at Wajir, the people in occupation of the wells were not the Madhanleh but the Dabarreh, the latter having recently been successful in turning out the former; and that the Dabarreh were then, in their turn, sent packing by the Wardeh.

To return to the threatened conflict between the Wardeh and the Ogaden, the stalemate on the Juba continued for a number of years. The Wardeh were determined to prevent their pastures from being overrun and their authority from being destroyed by the Somali invaders; and the Ogaden were just as firmly set on crossing the river and on moving into the grazing grounds beyond it. Both sides were confident of their strength, but the Somalis had a great wealth of stock to protect and were reluctant to resort to open warfare

lest they hazard it all; for had they attacked the Wardeh, the Tuni, the Rahanwein, and the Dighil would almost certainly have seized the opportunity to pay off old scores against them.

But the Wardeh had other enemies besides the Ogaden; and the pressure upon them from across the Juba did not go unnoticed by their westerly neighbours. According to Orma legend, it was not long before they found themselves being threatened on every side; just as the Ogaden were probing from the east, so were there sporadic raids by the Akamba in the south-west, the Masai in the west, and the Rendille from their newly acquired foothold on the Lorian. All the same, the Orma country was a large one and the Orma could muster hundreds of good fighting men; and in any case, constant raiding and counter-raiding was the accepted lot of the pastoral nomad. Dube Guyo's story is that the Wardeh were so successful in holding off all these attacks that the Ogaden sought a peace ceremony, and asked that they should be permitted to cross the Juba so that they might share with the Wardeh the benefits of peaceful co-existence. The old men are said to have deliberated for weeks before they finally and reluctantly agreed. At that time the Wardeh were strong enough to have stopped the Darod from moving their stock to the right bank, and it is hard to understand why they were so simple as to allow the Somalis across the river and to grant them access to the wells at Afmadu and to the rich grazing areas of the Deshek Wama. The reason was, I imagine, that the Somalis were as persistent then as they are today, and so fertile in promises of

co-operation and support, that the Wardeh accepted them in the hope that they would be an added protection against the Masai and the Akamba. (It is interesting to note that Charles New, in his account of the Bararetta Orma in 1865, refers constantly to the Masai as being the main enemy of these people; he makes no reference at all to the Somali.) In addition, the Wardeh were still smarting from the defeat they had suffered at the hands of the Elai some two hundred years before, and may have felt that any enemy of the Rahanwein must be a friend of theirs. Whether the Ogaden settled themselves at Afmadu by force or by fraud, or by consent or with unwilling acquiescence does not much matter; by 1860, or so, they were there.

No sooner had confidence been established than the Somalis were reinforced from the left bank of the Juba by a second wave of Ogaden who had managed to force their way southwards between the river and the Plateau. By this time (1860) the power of the Rahanwein had declined; the Marehan, another prong of the great Darod move, had crossed the upper Juba and were already in the Gedu country; and Bardera had been rebuilt and was strongly held by the Jama'a. This reinforcing move by way of Lugh and Bardera did not adopt the old pattern of probing the opposition, followed by agreements and temporary alliances. It was startlingly swift - there was now Darod cover for most of the way from the Web Shebelle to the lower Juba, and the need no longer existed for the more cautious tactics of the previous century. Not only were the Marehan well established at Garba Harre, but Herti Somalis,

many of whom had come south by dhow, were now to be found in some strength in the coastal area beyond Kismayu. A confederacy of tribes of Rahanwein and Hawiyah origin known as the Dighil, which had been formed in the first half of the century in order to provide mutual protection against the Darod (and of which not only the Jidu and the Tuni but also the Dabarreh, the tribe which had been expelled from Wajir and Buna by the Wardeh, were members) could do nothing to stop the invasion.

In 1865 the Wardeh were struck by an outbreak of smallpox which, according to them, had been brought into Afmadu by some of these new Somali immigrants. They were at once attacked on all sides. The main conflict was in the east; and the actions fought at Afmadu, on the Deshek Wama, and at El Lein are still spoken of by the tribe. On the north west the Gurreh and the Boran joined in; and to the north a confederation of minor tribes known as the Ker Galana also sided with the Somalis. The Gurreh launched raids from as far afield as Wachile - the father of old Ahamed Kiti, whose sons, Aden and Abdi, are well known in Moyale, himself took part in battles at Garba Geilo and Eil Wak. It is not difficult to guess why the Boran decided to support the Somalis against their own remote kindred; they were already firmly established at Buna and were anxious to gain control of the Wajir wells. But why the Ker Galana should have taken part is a mystery. The tribes which constituted this federation were the next on the list for absorption by the Somalis, and it may have been a futile

attempt to propitiate the invaders; but it is more likely to have been avarice and opportunism, coupled with the stimulating idea of taking part in a Muslim Somali war against the pagan Galla. Another possibility is that this confederacy, which was made up of a surprisingly powerful combination of tribes from the Daua River, including Gurreh cultivators, Gurre Murre, Shermoge, Gassr Gude, and Gabbar Wein, may have been acting under advice, promises, and threats from the Marehan; for these people were not yet firmly established on the upper Juba - they had not been there for more than thirty or forty years - and would have welcomed any diminution in the fighting strength of the people whose grazing ranges they were at that time planning to take over.

Most contests over grazing areas are struggles of attrition. They go on season after season until one side - not as a rule the Somali - finds the game not worth the candle and moves on. But the Wardeh war was quite different. The attack was so unexpected and so violent that the Wardeh were utterly broken by it. Scattered though the fighting was, hundreds were killed; those who survived either fled to neighbouring tribes or became serfs to the Mohamed Zubeir, the Telemuggeh, or the Maghabul. Many were sold as slaves in the markets of Lamu and Zanzibar. It is said that at the end of the century the Wardeh as a separate entity were reduced to no more than seven families.

The grandfathers of most of the leading figures of the Garissa district were involved.

Guyo Gokanneh, the father of Dube Guyo, was one of the survivors. He became a serf to the Maghabul but, having killed a man and not having behind him the support of a Dia-paying group, was compelled to flee. He joined the Bararetta at Garsen and it was here that Dube was born in 1890. The Somali leaders were Maghan Yussuf of the Mohamed Zubeir, then aged about forty, and his son Mohamed. Hassan Burgan of the Abdullah, the grandfather of the present Chief, and Abdi Ibrahim, the grandfather of Maalim Mohamed Stambul of the Abd Wak, were also prominent; and it was one of the great sorrows of old Mohamed Nur, the father of Hilole Mohamed, and a leader of the Aulihan, that, having been born at Afmadu (between 1855 and 1860) after the Ogaden had crossed the Juba, he had been too young to be allowed to take part in the fighting.

The old men of the Wardeh, full of wisdom after the event, still ask themselves how their great-grandfathers could have behaved with such inconceivable stupidity. The Muslims declare it to have been the will of God and describe how, some years before the disaster, the Wardeh had put themselves under a curse. The story is that one Sheikh Mumin, a wandering Ishaak holy man, called upon the Wardeh of Afmadu to pay him tribute of one hundred oxen. The Wardeh, proud of their strength and confident that, safely settled as they were on the far bank of the Juba, no harm could come to them from the Somali or the Rahanwein, sent him instead a hundred dogs. Sheikh Mumin laid a formal curse upon them, telling them that they, the Wardeh, would become the dogs of the country; it was from that day that their

fortunes started to decline. (The story is hotly denied by the Wardeh, who say it is nothing more than a malicious legend minted by the Gurreh. But old Abdi Mahad, the deposed Chief of the Adjuran Garen, and a great historian, declares it to be true, save that Sheikh Mumin was no Ishaak but an Adjuran Ker Khatan.)

The immediate result of the Ogaden victory over the Wardeh was to spread Somali influence westwards to Wajir and beyond, and to encourage the movement of the Gurreh from southern Ethiopia into what is now the Mandera District. In addition, the Somalis were, for the first time, brought into contact with the Masai. Of the long term results the most interesting was the watering down, over the next two generations, of the fighting strength of the Mohamed Zubeir and the Telemuggeh by inter-marriage with their Wardeh serfs. Amongst the Mohamed Zubeir the offspring of Somali fathers and Wardeh mothers are referred to as the "Weil Tullo" as opposed to the "Weil Tagok", the pure Ogaden. A distinction of rather the same sort exists further north between the Rer Hassan and Rer Talha sections of the Marehan who arrived on the upper Juba about 1830, and who sought wives from amongst the local people, and those Marehan who came down in the early years of the present century. The former are a fairly biddable people; but the latter - largely Ker Ahamed and Ker Farah Ugas, and known as the "Galte" - are typical of the toughest northern Somali. Many of the "Galte" had been followers of the Mullah, and arrived on the Juba with nothing but a rifle and a pony and a warlike spirit which made

them the most formidable fighting men in Jubaland. "Galte", by the way, means "stranger" or "newcomer" and its use is not confined to the Marehan only.

Although the Wardeh were compelled to leave the Wajir wells, the Somalis made no attempt to occupy them. There was, indeed, no reason why they should; they had established their ascendancy in battle, had prepared the way for their next leap to the west (it was to take place some forty years later) and had ample room in which to graze their stock without interference. The pastoral nomad aims to dominate an area, to be at liberty to use the kind of graze or browse the season demands, to avoid the attentions of authority, and to be free from neighbours whose stock may compete with his own for water and may well import disease into his herds. All this the Somalis had achieved. Their cattle people had access to all the grazing served by the Afmadu wells and the pans of the Beshek Wama; and the good camel country further west was open to them.

The history of the next thirty or forty years can best be related to three areas - the north, the Uaso, and the lower Juba. As soon as the Boran and the Adjuran found the wells at Wajir appeared to lack any effective occupation they came south and settled themselves there. In the same way they moved into Eil Wak. But their tenure of these important systems was not to last for long. Between 1880 and 1895 they were attacked by much the same combination of forces as that which had succeeded in destroying the Wardeh; the Ogaden were, however, somewhat

less prominent in these northern encounters, for, as I shall describe, much of their strength, in particular the Telemuggeh and many sections of the Aulihan and the Mohamed Zubeir, were engaged further south against those branches of the Koreh (including the Rendille, the Samburu and the Laikipiak Masai) that still preserved a hold over the Lorian and the lower reaches of the Uaso Nyiro. In what are now the Moyale and Mandera Districts, sporadic encounters took place between the Somali on the one side and the Boran and the Adjuran on the other; Mohamed Nur, for instance, the father of Hilole Mohamed of the Aulihan, fought at Eil Lass, Ogorchi, and Moyale, under the command of Maghan Yussuf, against the Gonna Boran; and Mahad Hassan, the father of Abdi Mahad of the Adjuran Garen, was killed at Eil Wak in 1895 in one of the same series of actions. Abdi Ibrahim of the Abd Wak even found time from his preoccupations with the Uaso campaign to spend a full year at Buna directing operations against Yattani Kuno's Boran and his Adjuran shegats. But the Somalis, once again, made no attempt to consolidate their gains, and the Boran, who at that time were a far better organized fighting force than at present, managed to maintain their positions at both Wajir and Eil Wak until about 1910; they hung on to Buna until a good many years later.

The position further south was that the Masai, after their defeats in Tanganyika of 1850, had undertaken a tentative probing to the east and north in search of new grazing areas. Between 1875 and 1876 they had

penetrated as far as Korondil; but here, when for the first time they had to face mounted men, they proved themselves no match for the Boran and their ponies, and withdrew again to the Uaso. From their base on the Lorian Swamp they, and such of the Rendille as had not moved to the north-west, carried out intermittent raids into the country of the lower Juba. By 1880 the Ogaden, under the command of Abdi Ibrahim of the Abu Wak, had got as far as the Lorian and were working towards the middle reaches of the Uaso; over the next twenty years they fought a number of actions with the Koreh in all of which the Somalis appeared to get rather the worse of it. Nevertheless by the turn of the century the Masai, the Samburu and the Rendille had all been compelled to leave the middle and lower stretches; and the Somalis were thrusting into the foothills of Meru.

Two of Abdi Ibrahim's engagements are worth recording in more detail. In 1886 he led a mixed army of Abd Wak, Aulihan, Mohamed Zubeir, Herti, and Marehan from Afmadu to the middle reaches of the Uaso Nyiro. They camped at Kuru Barata, and from there moved south-west towards Garba Tulla and the Nyambeni Hills. On the way, not far from the small wedge-shaped hill which lies to the north of the present Isiolo/Garba Tulla road, they were ambushed by a party of Samburu and Wanderobo. So great was the skill of these bowmen that they inflicted casualties on the Somalis heavy enough to cause them to retire in confusion. It is said that the Samburu and Wanderobo numbered no more than seven men; and in recognition of the disgrace of this

defeat the hill has become known by the Somalis as Bur Bilaya - the Hill of Shame.

For the next half dozen years various groups of Ogaden shared an uneasy peace with the Rendille and the Masai. The Samburu had already begun to move westwards, and the Bur Bilaya affair was the last action on the Uaso in which they took part. The Ogaden had one fight with Rendille remnants at Sericho and, although the latter claim to have been victorious, for them too it was their last appearance.

In 1892 Abdi Ibrahim, who was then over sixty and anxious to establish his authority in opposition to the rising young men of the Mohamed Zubeir and the Aulihan, decided on a last expedition into the Meru country. He collected some seven hundred fighting men and, starting from the Merti Plateau, set off for the Nyambeni Hills. By the time his force had reached Garba Tulla it was split by intrigue and faction quarrels; and, partly as a result of this internal discord and partly owing to unhappy memories of the Bur Bilaya action, half his strength turned back. Those who went on were chiefly Abdi Ibrahim's own people of the Abd Wak. In spite of these difficulties the expedition got nearly as far as the present site of the Meru boma before meeting any effective opposition; but here they encountered a strong force of Meru and Samburu bowmen and were defeated with heavy loss. Two hundred of the invading party were said to have been killed. Abdi Ibrahim fought to the last, and was finally despatched by a Samburu spear whilst he knelt

on his prayer mat with one of his retainers holding up his pistol arm. The action is said to have been at Marandado, although some authorities give Kiengo. That was the end of one of the great Somali fighting men of the last century; he had taken part in most of the major encounters from Maddagoi against the Elai to the final unsuccessful attempt to enter the Kenya highlands.

News of the Wardeh defeat in 1865 did not take long to reach the northern Somalis, and from then onwards a steady stream of colonists made its way to the lower Juba. Numbers of Herti came by sea from the northern Mijertein and settled around Kismayu. One party in 1868 attempted to obtain some kind of legal cover for the occupation of the country, for, after their arrival, they asked for and received the consent of Seyyid Majid, then Sultan of Zanzibar, to their remaining on the lower Jubaland coast. Having grudgingly acquiesced, the Sultan took no more interest. Kirk did his utmost to get Seyyid Majid to exercise some authority over Kismayu but, apart from maintaining an irregularly paid and wholly undisciplined garrison, the Sultan would have none of it.

Now that the Somali migrants had the Juba behind them and were masters of the country to the west, they were more secure than they had been for many generations. The tribes to the north and north-west had already shown themselves to be allies, or potential allies; and the only possible threat to their expansion westwards lay in the sporadic presence at Eil Wak, Wajir and the Lorian Swamp of fragments

of the Ethiopian forces which were then engaged in the conquest of Borana. So the need for cohesion, and for the presentation of a united front against a common enemy, no longer existed; and, as was inevitable, the Somali immigrants became divided by rival ambitions and by competing demands for specially favoured grazing grounds. Old feuds from the north were revived, and fresh quarrels were opened. Those Wardeh who had survived defeat and subsequent absorption by the Somali invaders, and those who had somehow managed to hold themselves aloof from the whole conflict, saw the likelihood of a new threat arising, and had the wisdom to move westwards out of the immediate sphere of Somali influence; on reaching the Tana they were accepted by the riverine tribes such as the Korokoro, the Malakote and the Malalulu, and contrived to settle themselves there with such stock as they had been able to acquire, free from any immediate threat of Somali domination.

In July 1891, the British East Africa Company, under an agreement with the Sultan of Zanzibar, established a fort at Kismayu, and assumed the administration of what then became known as the Jubaland Province. Through no fault of the Company the charge which it had undertaken proved to be quite beyond its capacity; and not even the best efforts of its servants could off-set the handicaps of lack of men, lack of money and, above all, lack of knowledge of the country and of its people. After an unhappy four years, marked by the disastrous episode known as Todd's baraza, the mutiny of the Sultan's garrison of Hyderabad troops, the sack of Gobwein, and the collapse

of various trading ventures, the administration of the country was transferred to Her Majesty's Government. The long, uphill task of introducing peace and good government began; law and order had to be established, and the tribes administered; and to open up the area to peaceful usages, roads had to be made, river transport developed and trade encouraged. The record of all that was done in the thirty years of British rule in Jubaland (1895-1925) is to be found in the Reports of the Jubaland Administration, and in the history of the King's African Rifles. It is an account of a patient, never-ending struggle against appalling odds; apart from the Juba and the Deshek Wama, the country was virtually waterless; communications scarcely existed; resources, especially food, medical supplies and transport, were exiguous; and the troops available were unsuited to the countryside, and no match for the Somali in the bush. Every ounce of experience had to be bought most dearly. Punitive campaigns had to be undertaken in 1898 and again in 1901 against the Ogaden; in 1914 against the Marehan; and in 1918 against the Aulihan. Internal bickering amongst the tribes was ceaseless; and from time to time the prosecution of old feuds developed into open warfare. The Mohamed Zubeir fought the Aulihan in 1906 and 1907, and in 1913 engaged themselves against the Abd Wak in a series of the most merciless encounters recorded in Somali history. The Aulihan quarrelled with the Marehan in 1915, and a year later attacked and destroyed the Government Station at Serenle, killing the officer in charge of the post and sixty-five

of his men. The Telemuggeh made themselves masters of the Tana and held this position for some years; they plundered the villages of the riverine people, sacked the Lutheran Mission at Ngao and effectively prevented the opening of communications and the development of trade. And to the north there loomed the constant threat of the Mullah (himself an Ogaden) and the recurring fear that he was about to call upon the tribes of the south to aid him in his campaign.

During these troubled years the Somali drive to the southwards was relentlessly pursued; the pace varied from year to year, but the goal was never forgotten. The next objectives after the Juba were the Tana, the Uaso Nyiro and the great well system of Wajir; and by 1909 each one of them had been reached.

The first Somalis to reach the Tana were the Telemuggeh tribes of the Ogaden. That is to say, the Abdullah, the AbdWak and the Rer Mohamed. They were some 15,000 strong, and by the end of the dry weather had brought to the river more than 50,000 head of stock. They came from Afmadu, the Deshek Wama and the Wama Idu; and with them were a great number of their Wardeh serfs. Many of the latter absconded from their masters as soon as they reached the Tana, and joined the settlements of "free" Wardeh which at that time were established on the left bank of the river. The Somalis were bitterly resentful at this defection; and the "free" Wardeh, encouraged by this unexpected increase in their fighting strength, were prepared to take a revenge for

their earlier defeats; it was only by good luck and through the preoccupation of both sides with their stock that a serious clash was averted. In accordance with the usual practice, the Somalis left the river at the onset of the rains and moved back to their wet weather grazing areas in the Rama Guda and the Kurde country. But next dry weather they were once again on the Tana. Unwelcome though they were, the Administration had not the strength to remove them; and the best that could be done was to establish a temporary K.A.R. post at Masabubu and to attempt to administer them by patrols operating from that point. It was clear that if the Wardeh stayed where they were, they would either be destroyed or absorbed by the Somalis; they were accordingly moved lock, stock and barrel, to the right bank (where they still are) and the Tana formally declared to be a line west of which the Somalis might not pass. Two years later the K.A.R. post was moved up-river to Sankuri. It was by this time apparent that for a large part of the year the Telemuggeh would be out of the range of the Administrative centre at Kismayu; and equally clear that we did not command the military strength needed to expel them from the Tana. It was accordingly decided to transfer the local seat of Government to Lamu. Some such move was clearly necessary; but communications were so poor that it brought no advantage. From Kismayu the Telemuggeh were scattered, remote, and hard to deal with; but from Lamu they were so inaccessible as to make it all but impossible to administer them at all. Control was so difficult to impose that

the Abdullah and Abd Wak became completely out of hand, and, for the best part of a decade, were able to pillage and despoil the local people at will. Their record over these years was one of almost unchecked turbulence and indiscipline; and it was not until the post at Bura was opened in 1927 that it became possible to preserve a degree of peace and good government in the area they occupied.

In the middle of 1912 Stambul Abdi, the head of the Abd Wak, and father of the present Chief, sought permission to take his people out of Jubaland and to settle permanently on the Tana. In the same year the Chiefs of the Abdullah and of the Ker-Mohamed had made a similar request, saying that all they wished to do was to settle within a prescribed area and, that if they were allowed to do so, they would respect their boundaries, pay their hut tax and restrain their young men. The request was granted, but only a few months were needed to show how empty these promises had been. The arrival of the Abd Wak at once gave the Abdullah an excuse for overstepping the limits that they had accepted; and within a short time a number of the local people had been murdered, crops had been pillaged, and the orders of the Government systematically defied.

The following passage from the official records of Jubaland for 1914 indicates how serious the position had by that year become:-

"Meanwhile the difficulties in Tanaland

caused by the presence of the Somali had been increasing. They refused to confine themselves to the boundaries laid down by the administrative officers; they seized the cattle of the natives; imposed 'taxation' upon them; and carried off their women. Murders were also periodically reported and the whole district along the Tana River was in a state of terror. The unrest was greatest during the periods before the commencement of the rainy seasons, as owing to the drought inland the Somali stock were unable to obtain sufficient water away from the river. Those administrative officers who had practical knowledge of the situation were unanimous in stating that the only satisfactory means of dealing with it was to debar the Somali from the river".

At the same time as the Telemuggeh moved to the Tana, the Aulihan were thrusting towards the lower reaches of the Uaso. By 1909 they had reached that part of the Lak Dera where the Lorian Swamp now lies, and by 1914 had established themselves at Wajir. The District Commissioner of Wajir strongly recommended to the Government that this tribe should be forcibly removed from the well area and compelled to return to Serenle; indeed, in the latter part of 1914 he succeeded in evicting the Ker Afgab, only to see them return in redoubled strength the following year.

Although the Darod were the most numerous,

the most influential, and the best organised of the groups of pastoral nomads who were thrusting their way to the south and to the west, they were not the only Somali nation involved in this move; the first Somalis to reach Wajir were not Darod from the east but Hawiyah from the north. Their history is an interesting one. After the reconquest of Harar by the Ethiopians the forces of the Emperor Menelik, under the command of Ras Makonnen, undertook a series of expeditions against the Somalis of the Mudugh and the Ogaden; some of these forays penetrated as far south as the middle reaches of the Juba, and brought the Emperor's men into contact with the score of Somali and half-Somali tribes which at that time were to be found in the country between the Web Shebelle and the Web Gestro. Rather than endure the risk of the sporadic depredations of Menelik's soldiers, and in response to the almost instinctive propensity of the Somali to drive westwards, many of the Hawiyah and quasi-Hawiyah tribes turned their eyes towards Juba-land and the Northern Frontier District in search of fresh grazing grounds. According to the legends of the Degodia, the Yaben section of the tribe broke up into four groups which dispersed to the west and the south. The westerly group moved up the valley of the Daua until further progress was prevented by the Boran; they then broke south and made their way through the bush-covered plains of the Libin, past Takabba and on to Wajir, arriving there in 1904. In the course of their journey they attached themselves to various Adjuran groups (largely Garen and

Gelberis), and taking advantage of the good relations which existed between their hosts and the Boran, who were then masters of the Wajir area, managed to weave themselves into the latter's confidence. Then, recognizing the strong position into which Ido Robleh, the head of the Adjuran, had manoeuvred himself vis-a-vis the local Boran, they straightway placed themselves under his protection and, through his advocacy, were allowed watering rights at the wells.

The Ogaden invasion of Wajir began in 1906. The earliest arrivals were the Mohamed Zubeir, followed within a few years by the Aulihan, the Maghabul and the Habr Suleman. It is not easy to determine the precise identity of these first-comers, for, as so often happened, the Somalis when faced with the possibility of effective opposition, tended to abandon for the moment their tribal individualities, and by submitting themselves for the nonce to the temporary sovereignty of the most influential tribe amongst them, to acquire a unity they would not otherwise have been able to command. In this way, numbers of Hawiyah as well as Ogaden, in undertaking the next great move westwards, grouped themselves under the banner of the Mohamed Zubeir. All that one can safely say is that the first-comers were either Mohamed Zubeir or snegats of the Mohamed Zubeir, or were Ogaden or Hawiyah, or even Herti, passing themselves off as Mohamed Zubeir.

Turning for a moment to the larger picture, the year 1909 saw the introduction

of the beginnings of a systematic administration of the enormous area lying between Ethiopia on the north, the Uaso Nyiro on the south, Lake Rudolf on the west, and Jubaland on the east; and the replacement of what was little more than a nominal control by something approaching conventional procedures. Stations were established at Moyale, Marsabit, and Meru with a headquarters at this last-named place; and in the following year the first Officer in Charge of the newly set up Northern Frontier District was formally appointed. It is of interest to note that one of the two main causes that impelled the Government of the Protectorate - for such Kenya's constitutional status then was - to take this step is cited in contemporary records as being the westward movement of the Somali tribes.

By 1909 the number of Somalis at Wajir competing with the Boran, the Adjuran, and the Sakuye (all of whom were regarded as having an established right to the grazing adjacent to the wells) for the dry weather pastures was so great that the Administration was forced to the conclusion that, although its responsibility to the Borar and their associates demanded the removal of the Somalis from Wajir and their repatriation to the area whence they had come, it just had not the strength to carry out such an operation. The forces available were, in fact, scarcely sufficient to protect the non-Somalis in their villages or to ensure for them the undisturbed use of the wells.

Zaphiro, the frontier agent, accordingly moved all the Boran and Sakuye, and many of the Adjuran, from Wajir, and settled them between Buna and the Dirre country below the Ethiopian escarpment. The scheme was wholly unsuccessful; on the wells, the Ogaden spread the report that the Boran and their shegats had left for good; and in the north the Boran found themselves in as much danger from the Ethiopians as they had been from the Ogaden. Reckoning the dangers and uncertainties of the frontier to be even greater than those of Wajir, the Boran, in 1910, returned to the south - only to find themselves crowded out by the still further augmented colony of Somalis which was then in occupation of the wells. The Adjuran, in spite of having offered their friendship and protection to the Degodia, fared no better; and even Ido Robleh complained of being excluded from his traditional grazing areas by these truculent interlopers.

Although some kind of modus vivendi was arrived at between, on the one hand, the Boran, the Adjuran, and the Sakuye and, on the other, the Somali immigrants, it was clear that the only way in which peace could be ensured was either to acquiesce in the expulsion of the Boran or to give them the protection they needed. The first course was clearly unacceptable and, as a number of other factors had arisen all pointing to the need for a military and administrative post at this vital well-centre, it was decided to open a station at Wajir. The urgency of such a step became even more apparent in 1911 when the Ogaden

immigrants sacked a Sakuye village near the wells, killing twenty-six of the occupants and carrying off 5,000 head of stock.

The establishment of the post at Wajir had an immediate effect on the numbers of tribesmen using the wells. Despite the reduction in the Boran and Sakuye population, the overall tally of adult males increased from 1,500 in 1910 to 3,600 in 1913; and the number of wells in use from 55 to 126.

The allocation is of interest:-

		Adult males
Mohamed Zubeir	... 15 wells ...	700
Ugas Guleid	... 20 " ...	600
Habr Suleman	... 18 " ...	500
Maghabul	... 7 " ...	600
Herti	... 9 " ...	400
Degodia	... 26 " ...	800
Boran	... 17 " ...	?

Of the Somalis the Mohamed Zubeir were the leaders of the migration from the Juba; the Maghabul had accompanied them; and the Habr Suleman - a wild, independent tribe the main body of which was at that time engaged in a campaign against the Italians - had followed later. The Herti were amongst the last arrivals from the north; and although most of the families then at Wajir had come from the lower Juba, none had taken part in the operations against the Warden. The Degodia, in addition to being at Wajir in some strength on their own account, and as shegats to various Ogaden sections were also

present in considerable numbers masquerading as members of the Mohamed Zubeir; indeed the Wajir Ugas Guleid (a section so large that it could claim its own wells) contained a large proportion of Degodia, Ker Mohamed, who, in the course of a move westwards from the Juba between 1904 and 1908 had jointed forces with the "true" Ugas Guleid (a section of the Mohamed Zubeir) and had reached Wajir in their company.

The officer in charge of the Northern Frontier District at that time strongly recommended that the Somali should be told that the district belonged to the Boran and that they, the Somali, had no rights there; and that they should be ordered to return to their own country. Clearly, it would have been impossible for such an order to have been carried out, for the Somalis, quite apart from being well armed, with a high repute as fighting men, owned virtually all the camels; and without calling upon them to provide camel transport for the operation there was no way by which troops could have been put into the field.

By the end of 1912, the attitude of the Mohamed Zubeir, who were by now firmly established at Wajir, and who had come to regard the district as part of their territory, was the cause of considerable uneasiness to the Administration. The Sultan, Ahamed Maghan, the son of Maghan Yussuf, had little or no control over the young men of the tribe, and seemed always ready to make promises which he clearly never contemplated fulfilling. Like most Somalis, he was, too, something of a

psychologist; and on one occasion, taking advantage of the presence in the station of a fairly junior Administrative Officer, he sent him a plausible letter in which he declared that the Government had given him the district of Wajir as his own, and asked that arrangements might be made for him to take it over. Fortunately, the District Officer was equal to the occasion, and contriving to get Ahamed Maghan away from his followers, had him arrested and sent under escort out of the district. (There was something ironical about this whole episode for when, after the sacking of Serenle by the Aulihan in 1916, we were compelled to vacate Wajir at short notice, it was the Mohamed Zubeir who occupied the station and who, in the period of our absence, became complete masters of the area. In accordance with the complicated code of Somali honour, the station was handed back precisely as it had been left with no Government stores removed or interfered with.)

The outbreak of the Mohamed Zubeir/Abd Wak war in 1913, in the course of which Ahamed Maghan met his death in battle, made the situation at Wajir even more difficult. Not only were we unable to maintain peace and good government amongst the tribes, but we still lacked the means to offer proper protection to those whom we frankly admitted to be the lawful occupants of the country. The District Commissioner of the day strongly recommended that the Mohamed Zubeir should be sent back to Afmadu and the Deshek Wama; that the Aulihan, who were then living at Wajir and on the Lorian Swamp, should be forced to return

to Serenle, and that the Maghabul and Habr Suleman should only be allowed to stay provided a limitation could be placed upon their numbers. But once again lack of men, lack of money and lack of transport prevented anything from being done; and the Somalis, somehow aware of the predicament in which the Administration found itself, set about increasing their numbers; it is estimated that during the first six months of 1914 no less than 4,000 Somalis entered the Northern Frontier District through Jubaland. A considerable proportion of them were remnants of the armies of the Mullah, and the number of rifles brought into the district by these men presented yet one more threat to the security of the area. The finishing touch was provided by Chief Abdurrahman Mursaal, the Chief of the Aulihan, who in 1915 announced that, on his recent visit to Nairobi, he had seen the Governor and had been formally granted the whole of the country between the Juba River and Wajir. Abdurrahman Mursaal's claim was regarded at the time as being yet one more example of Somali arrogance; yet, within a few months, he had destroyed Serenle, murdered the garrison, and captured the only Maxim guns in the whole of upper Jubaland. As a result, we were compelled to withdraw from Wajir for a period of four or five months (February to July 1916) and to organize a full migration to the north-west of those Gurreh who were at that time based on the Eil Wak wells and were in danger of Aulihan attacks.

The year 1925 is a suitable point at which to assess what might be called the post-Juba dispositions of the Somali - that is to

say, the waters they had secured for themselves following their advance westwards from the Juba, and the grazing to which they claimed a right by virtue of their command of those waters. For by that date, although the Aulihan campaign had been successfully concluded, the tribe disarmed, and a fine imposed large enough to remind the other Ogaden sections of the cost of violent rebellion, a number of factors, primarily our preoccupations on the Ethiopian frontier, had compelled us to accept the presence of the Somalis at Wajir and on the Tana, and to abandon any attempt at moving them out of the Northern Frontier District. Away to the east the recent handover of Jubaland to the Italians, and the relatively large force that the successor Government appeared to have at its disposal, had made the Ogaden and Herti of that region reluctant to bring themselves to official notice until they had had an opportunity of gauging the quality of their new administrators.

Save for the Boran, the situation at Wajir in 1925 was not very different from what it is today, the wells being shared between the Adjuran, the Degodia and the Ogaden Somalis. The Ogaden included Mohamed Zubeir, Maghabul and Habr Suleman but no longer any Aulihan; for we had taken advantage of the forces available to us in the expedition which followed the Serenle episode to move these people back towards the Juba. (Nevertheless, within a few years, they had returned to the lower reaches of the Uaso, and by 1925 were watering their stock on the Tana. Today they use the waters of both the Lorian Swamp and the Tana; Wajir, however, is closed to them.)

Although the Boran still had, in 1925, a traditional claim to the use of the Wajir waters, their strength had been so undermined by open Somali attacks, and by the fifth column of their Adjuran shegats, that they scarcely dared approach the wells. And by 1932, victims not only of direct Somali pressure but of the treachery of the very people to whom they had consented to provide protection, they could no longer pretend to exercise any of their old rights; so that the Administration, recognizing the inevitability of the eclipse of the Boran, had no alternative but to move the remnants of the tribe to the Uaso.

On the Tana, the position in 1925 was very much as it is today. The Abdullah, the Abd Wak and the Rer Mohamed had established themselves between Balambala in the north and Masabubu in the south, with the Aulihan steadily moving in to the upper reaches of this section of the river.

The arrival of the Italians, and the surveillance that they were able to exercise over local tribal movements such as those of the Bartirreh and the Jubaland Maghabul did, it is true, make the watering places of the lower Tana less liable to sudden incursions from the east. The wider problem, nowever, remained, proving as great an embarrassment to the Italian authorities of the Lower Juba as, prior to 1925, it had to the British Administration of Jubaland. By the end of the nineteen-thirties the Jubaland Mohamed Zubeir numbered some 12,000 plus an estimated 6,000 shegats, and the Jubaland Herti nearly

as many; further north the unvarying pattern of infiltration - this time between the Marehan and the Habr Gedir - was manifesting itself; and Darod pressure on the local population of Sab tribespeople had become so great that it looked as though it would, before long, be no longer possible to regard Hoddur as an administrative centre for the Rahanwein.

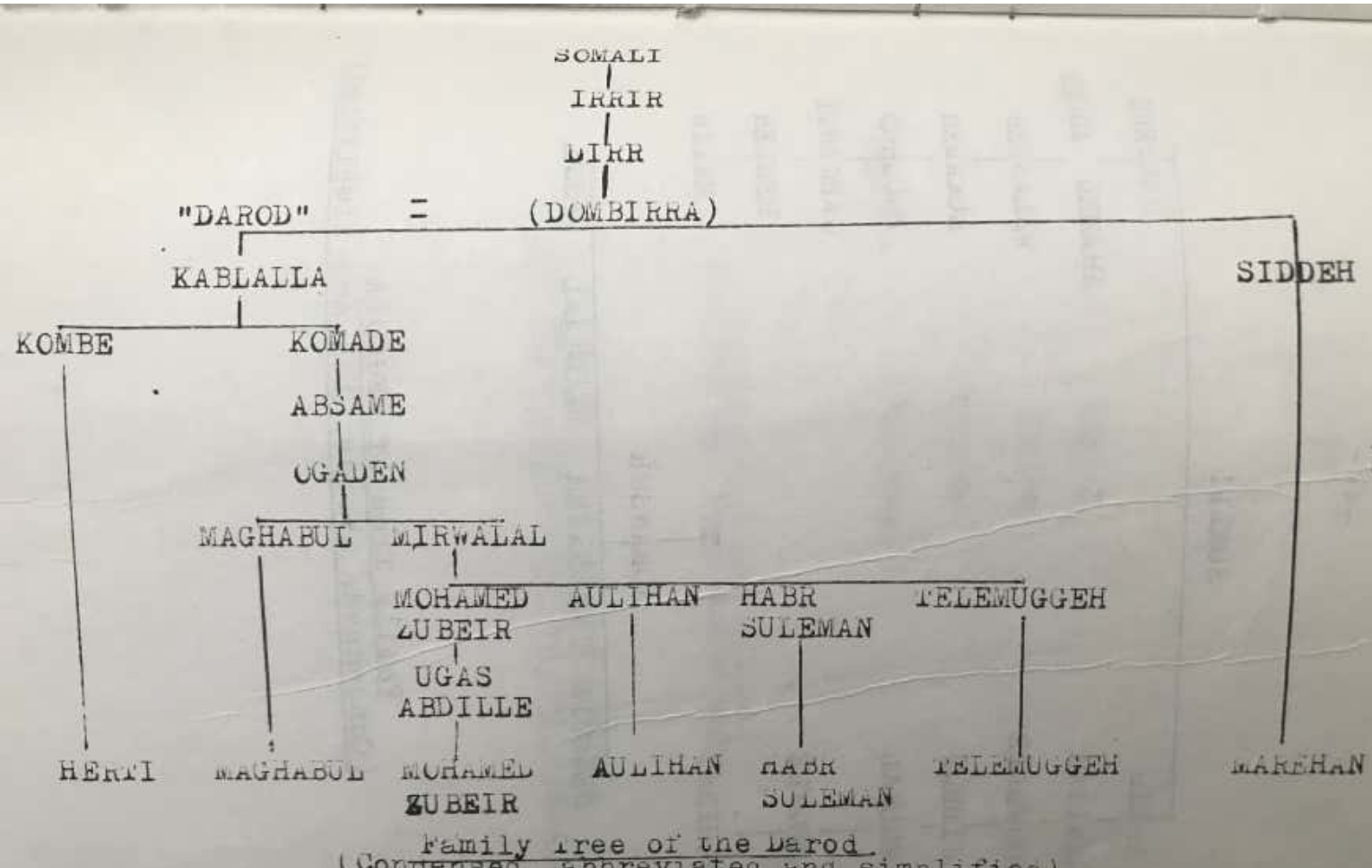
To turn again to the wider picture, unlike the constantly repeated pattern of seasonal stock movements from grazing area to grazing area, these long-range migrations must, at some point in time or in space, come to a stop. Either the supply of migrants exhausts itself; or the receiving country turns out to be so unwelcoming in terms of the health of the livestock or by way of violent opposition from rival claimants to the local water and pastures that a halt has to be called; or the migrants themselves, their characters modified and their determination blunted by inter-marriage into one or other of the more stable communities with which they have made contact during the move, or by experience of the luxury of running water for the stock instead of the harsh discipline of the deep well, deciding that fighting is not, after all, the only proper pursuit of man, and that the hardships of the enterprise are no longer acceptable.

Of those three factors it was the operation of the second that brought the Darod invasion to an end; though the passage of time would, doubtless, have seen the third, and perhaps even the first, taking effect.

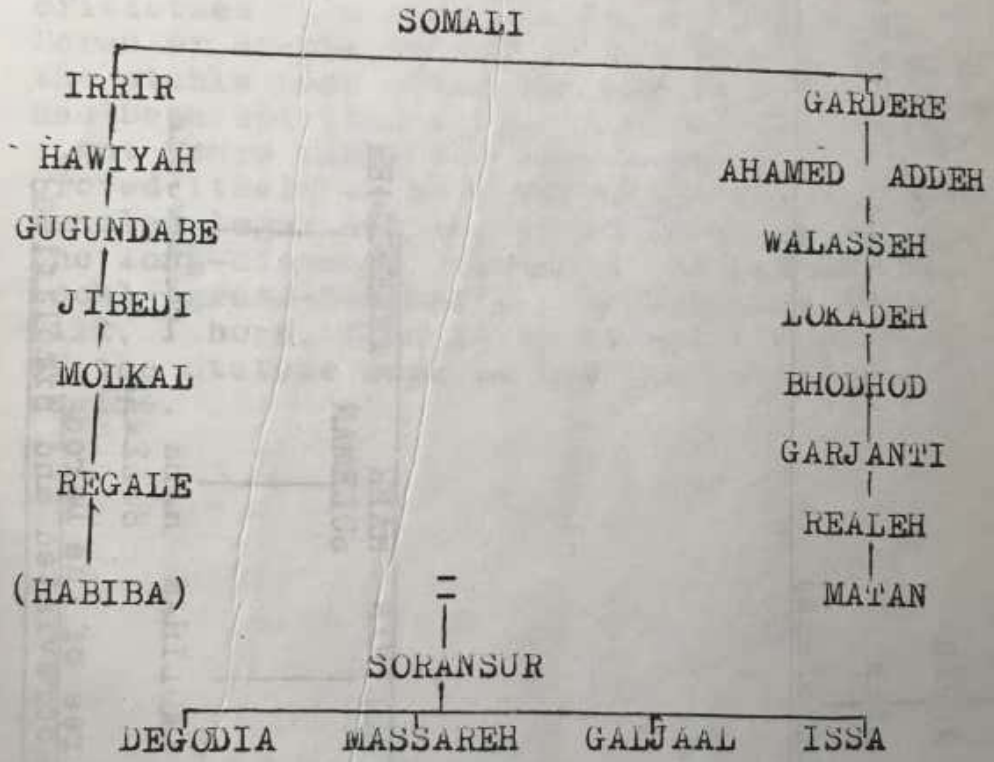
It was not so much the violent opposition of the Boran and the Sakuye that stopped the Darod; for the amount of power that could be exercised by these unhappy demoralised people was not such as to deter a man of the quality of, say, Abdurrahman Mursaal. But the decision of the Government of the Protectorate to exclude the Aulihan from Wajir, and the heavy fines collected in the course of the Aulihan campaign of 1918 were quite a different matter; and although the second half of the nineteen twenties saw a good deal of manoeuvring by the various Ogaden sections between the Wajir and Garissa districts on the one hand and Italian Somaliland on the other, there were none of the massive incursions that, ten years earlier, had so jeopardised the peace and good government of the District.

Earlier in this paper I have described 1909 as seeing the start of a systematic administration of the Northern Frontier District. 1934 is a year of equal importance; for it witnessed the introduction of the Special Districts Ordinance, an enactment that enabled the Officer in Charge of the District to allocate certain pastures and certain grazing ranges and certain waters to specific tribes, and to prohibit other tribes from trespassing on these preserves; at the same time he was empowered to prohibit the use of particular grazing ranges and water supplies by specified tribespeople, and in this way not only to protect the resources of the region against overstocking and other forms of bad land use but to ensure that in times of inter-tribal tension known trouble-makers could be kept out of areas where their presence might

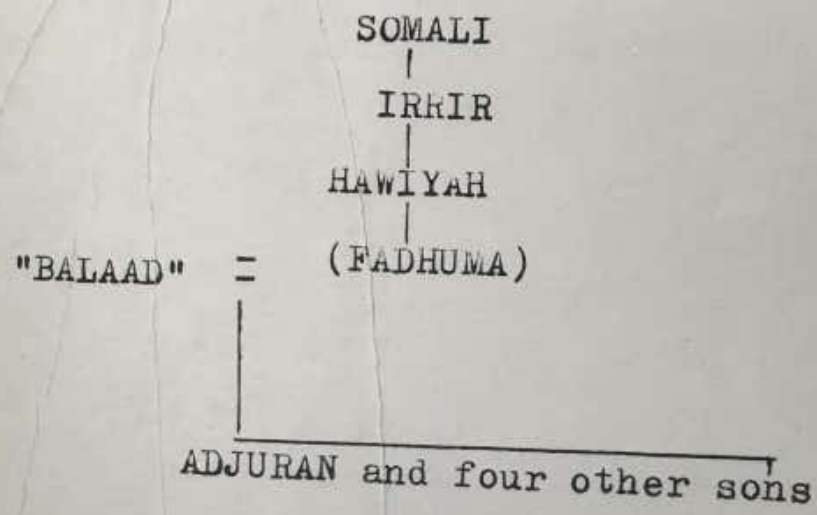
be expected to spark off a serious incident. Admittedly the Ordinance could have been criticised by a disgruntled, dispossessed Boran or Sakuye on the grouns that it sealed the stable pump after the pump's water-supply had been spirited away; but for the twenty-eight years since its introduction it has proved itself to be a versatile and easily handled legal weapon, as efficacious against the long-distance "invaders" as against the local "grass-poacher". Independent Kenya will, I hope, find it as valuable a chapter of the Statute Book as has the Colonial regime.



Family tree of the Darod
(Condensed, abbreviated and simplified)



Family Tree of DEGODIA
(Condensed, abbreviated and simplified)



Family tree of the ADJURAN
(Condensed, abbreviated and simplified)